



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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#### INTERIOR URGES USE OF DETROIT RIVER ISLANDS FOR WATERFOWL REFUGE

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today endorsed a proposal to create a national wildlife refuge on two small islands in the Detroit River.

These islands, the lagoon-like stretch of water between them and adjacent shoal waters constitute one of the most important concentration points in the Nation for diving ducks, especially the canvasback, greater scaup and redhead ducks. As a canvasback feeding area it is ranked with the famous Havre de Grace feeding grounds on Chesapeake Bay. It is also important feeding ground for black ducks.

The islands, Grassy and Mammy Juda, are in the Detroit River about 10 miles south of Detroit, Michigan. Some months ago they were annexed by the city of Wyandotte, Michigan, but the annexation provided for their use as a waterfowl refuge. They are the property of the United States Government.

In a letter to Chairman Herbert C. Bonner of the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, Secretary Udall urged the enactment of H.R. 1182 which would establish the Wyandotte National Wildlife Refuge, which would include the two islands. The islands have been set aside for use by the Coast Guard but the Secretary explained that the management of a refuge would have no adverse effect upon any Coast Guard operations. He explained also that the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Service, plans to permit public recreational activities on certain portions of the area.

It is not uncommon for 50,000 to 100,000 ducks to concentrate in this area. In the winter, because the river keeps the area open, large flocks of ducks feed on the luxuriant stands of powdered and wild celery.

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